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ESPERANTO, AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE

By GEORGE WINTHROP LEE

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"Neither will they be persuaded, even though one rose from the dead."

IT would seem futile to use the stock arguments for Esperanto, or any other international language, when so much has already been written and the reasons are so obvious and the language proved so usable, when still the populace is not aroused and prejudice appears to reign fairly supreme. Accordingly I shall here attempt only to answer, in part, that familiar question of the great skeptical majority: How is Esperanto getting on? I say "in part" because, for the sake of simplicity and definite example, I here confine myself almost altogether to reviewing the August issue of *The British Esperantist* (printed mostly in Esperanto), trusting that every sign of stability or progress suggested therein will be a sign of international brotherhood and therefore of interest to advocates of peace.

Among the events chronicled are: The regular monthly divine service in Esperanto at Harecourt Church, Canonbury, London; the program for August of the London Club, which, like the majority of the more than 100 groups and societies affiliated to the British Esperanto Association, has an evening meeting every week; lectures recently given by the association secretary in eight different localities; report of lecture in Auckland, New Zealand, in which the speaker said that "the most striking proof of its international utility that the language had yet achieved was that during the war the Germans had considered it worth while to issue regularly, for the benefit of the neutral nations, an authorized Esperanto translation of their official war bulletins;" the meeting of the "Federations of Lancashire and Cheshire and of Yorkshire," at which it was resolved that the British Esperanto Association ought not to have omitted its regular meeting this year, for "the present time is exceedingly opportune for calling the public's attention to our movement;" the agreement of the Elementary Education Subcommittee of Keighley "to permit the experiment of teaching Esperanto in one of the schools, subject to the approval of the chief inspector of the district," a teacher to be supplied by the society; and likewise a note on Truro (Cornwall), viz: "At the School of Commerce, 5, Castle-st., Esperanto has been systematically taught by the principal, Mr. Pentecost. After the autumn vacation Esperanto will be a compulsory subject all through the school." Also it tells of a soldier, just returned after a furlough, in which he used Esperanto, not knowing any other language than that and English, and having a splendid vacation by means of it.

Then the Chronicle enumerates press notices in weeklies and monthlies since its last month's record—38 in all. Likewise it records progress in

Southport, Finchley, Grimsby, Liverpool, and Wisbeach, and in three places it calls attention to the important "Eccles Experiment," the most successful teaching of Esperanto in the lower grade schools.

In addition to the Chronicle there is a special article entitled "A call to patriotism and prudence." This deals with commerce after the war, and calls attention to man's inconsistency, in accordance with the following translation:

"If six merchants should wish to unite efforts to gain a common end for the good of all six, would they choose six different ways, each of them long, difficult and tedious, to attain that end, when one short, easy way would bring the same result? No? Why, then, learn Russian, French, Roumanian, Italian, Portuguese, English, etc., languages for international commerce when here, ready at hand, and being used throughout the world, is a simple, easily acquired, neutral, international language, Esperanto, which fulfills every requirement?" The article then goes on to note that long since the London Chamber of Commerce has put Esperanto on the same footing as Spanish, French and other languages in its examination list, and that since 1906 lessons in Esperanto have been given in the commercial evening schools. Furthermore, that in the last commercial congress in Madrid, Esperanto was accepted as an international medium, while in Lisbon a very important daily paper has its regular Esperanto heading, and the Esperanto Propaganda Committee in Portugal is now subsidized by the Lisbon Chamber of Commerce and six other commercial and industrial associations. Each of these associations has written the Department of Industry in London to say that it fully approves of accepting Esperanto as a common commercial language, and similar letters have been sent from cities in France, Italy, Russia, and Spain.

The article finally asks, "Why, then, do not the Entente Allies accept this great saving device?" and answers by saying, "Simply because the governments do not act until the force of public opinion compels them. Therefore, with full confidence, we call upon every good patriot, who wishes to look to the welfare of his country in peace the same as in war, to come and help in this cause, which is very, very important for the commercial and national life of the allied countries, and to do his best to influence public opinion in this question of a common commercial language, in order that we may reap the full benefit of commerce between the allied countries after the war."

The same (August) number of the *British Esperantist* notes, as usual, books and magazines received—among the latter Esperanto journals published in France, Spain, Holland, Switzerland, China, Japan, and South America, while we know they are published elsewhere, too, not to mention *Amerika Esperantisto* (West Newton, Mass.). It also has an article on the Church Esperanto League, which is about to publish a new quarterly journal.